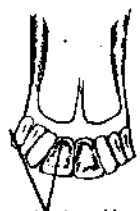


****ATTENTION****

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FAWN



4 Milk
Incisors

CALF

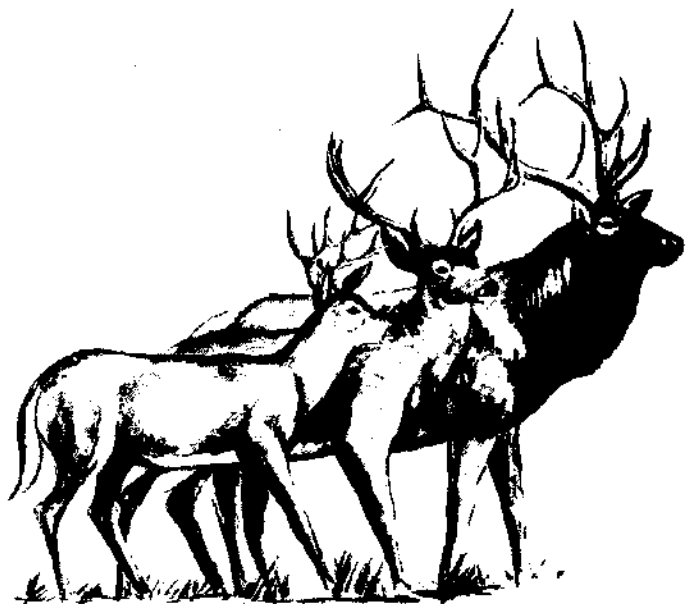


4 Milk
Incisors

Age determination of deer or elk by examination of its teeth is the most accurate method. Deer and elk antlers do not "add" an extra point each year. In fact, quantity and quality of food supply are the determining factors in the impressiveness of an elk or deer's head gear.

Deer and elk, like horses and humans, have "milk" or baby teeth, and permanent teeth. Elk and deer lose these baby teeth at predictable times, making examination of tooth structure an accurate aging method. As the animal gets older, certain teeth discolor first. Discoloration of teeth and general state of "wear" are guides in helping you to determine the age of your elk or deer.

Sub-species of North American deer vary widely as to height and weight. The largest deer found in the West are mule deer. The Washington whitetail sub-species is called the Northwest whitetail. Pictured on the front cover are trophy Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer and white-tailed deer typical of those which may be taken by Washington hunters.



IDENTIFICATION and AGING of WASHINGTON Deer and Elk



STATE GAME DEPARTMENT
600 North Capitol Way
Olympia, Washington

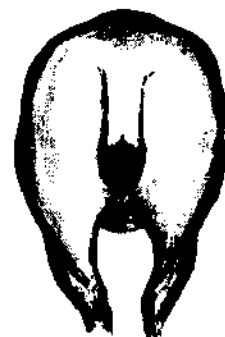
Black-Tailed Deer

Black-tailed deer are found in large numbers throughout western Washington. Antlers, like those of the mule deer, are forked, but not as massive. The main identification feature is this deer's name-sake. Its **tail is completely black on top**, with the possible exception of a small white tip. Holding its tail erect when running, like the whitetail, hunters often spot white hair on the underside of the tail and mistakenly refer to this deer as a "whitetail", which it is not.



Mule Deer

This deer is so named because of its very large ears. The mulie is found most plentiful along the eastern slopes of the Cascades, and throughout all of eastern Washington. With plentiful food supply, both mule deer and blacktails develop "two points" as yearling animals. However, with unfavorable food supply, yearling mule and black-tailed deer will develop only "spikes". Main identification features of the mule deer are its **large ears, narrow white tail with a black tip and rebranching antlers**.



White-Tailed Deer

Whitetails are most abundant in Washington's northeastern counties. A subspecies, the Columbian white-tailed deer, occurs in limited numbers along lower Columbia river bottom lands. This deer is identified by its large tail, the **topside of which is reddish-brown, but the underside is white**. The whitetail also possesses the largest tail of all the deer, being exceptionally long, white and bushy. **Antlers do not fork, but all tines rise from a single main beam**.



Aging

Your Deer or Elk Three...Four...Ten Point?

Many elk hunters are confused as to what to call their trophy. Normal adult elk carry six "tines" or points. As a matter of practice in the western United States, you may count all tines over one inch long, on the side with the most points. In the eastern United States, common practice is to count all points of both sides.

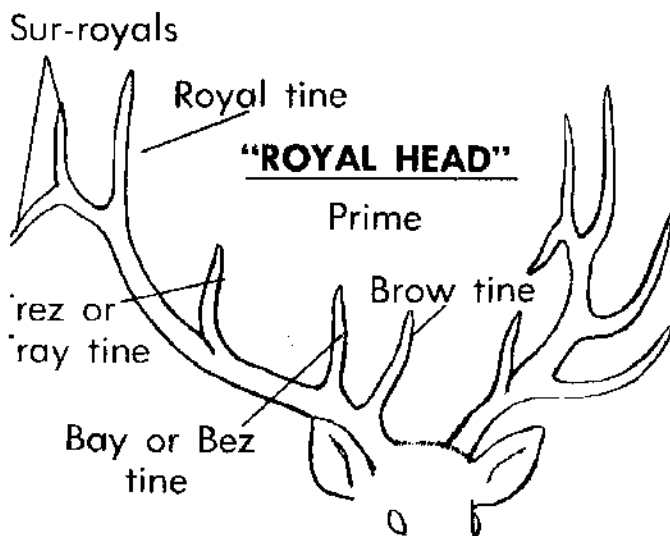
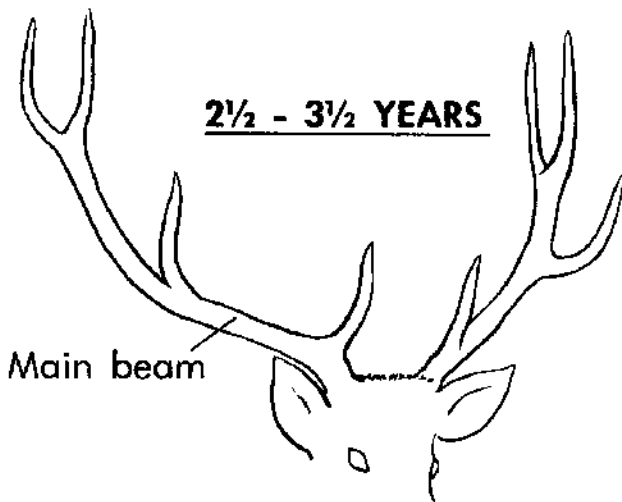
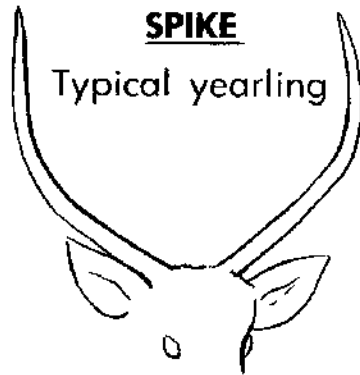
Tradition, going back to European medieval times, flourishes in the naming of each elk antler tine. Young elk, 1½ years old, usually have a single point or "spike". Spike length may vary from a few inches to over 15 inches long. Antler growth is greatly dependent upon quality and quantity of food available.

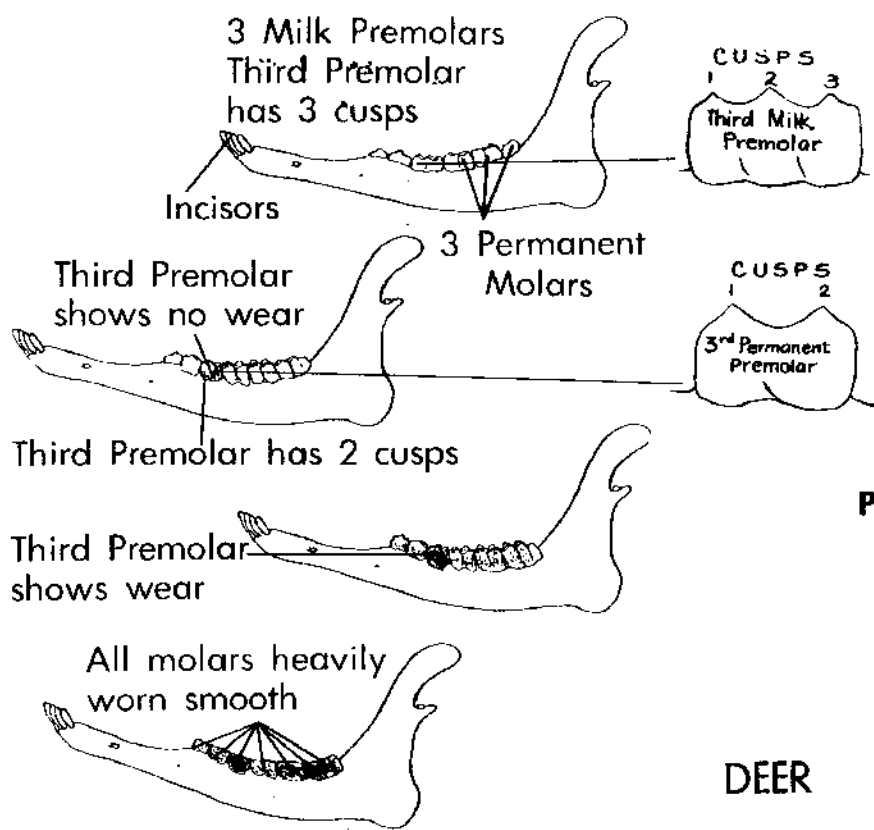
Older bulls usually have more points, but sub-normal food supply may retard antler development. Like deer, elk shed their antlers each year. The second set of antlers grown are typically four or five points. Some 2½ year old elk may have only one "brow" tine, or eye guard. Some have an additional "bay" or "bez" tine, but lack the third tine found on a mature rack. This third tine is called the "trez" tine.

The number of points a deer or elk carries is a poor indication of age. As with a horse, tooth development is the most accurate aging method. On the reverse side of this brochure you will find information to help you age your deer or elk by examination of its teeth. Counting points is not an accurate indicator of age, but generally the older the bull, the more massive is the size of the main beam at its base.

A mature bull elk has a full set of antlers with six points on each side, and is known as a "Royal" head. A bull with 14 points (7 each side) is called an "Imperial" stag. The fourth point on the outermost curve of the antler is called the "royal" or "dagger point". This is the dominant tine of the mature elk's rack. The remaining points occurring at the end of the main beam are called "sur-royals". They are smaller than the other tines, often appearing to be a forking of the main beam at the tip.

There are two elk species in Washington. The Rocky Mountain elk occurs only east of the Cascade crest. Roosevelt elk occur west of the Cascade crest in the heavy, timbered forests of western Washington.





YEARLING

Possibility of one remaining milk incisor



2½ YEAR

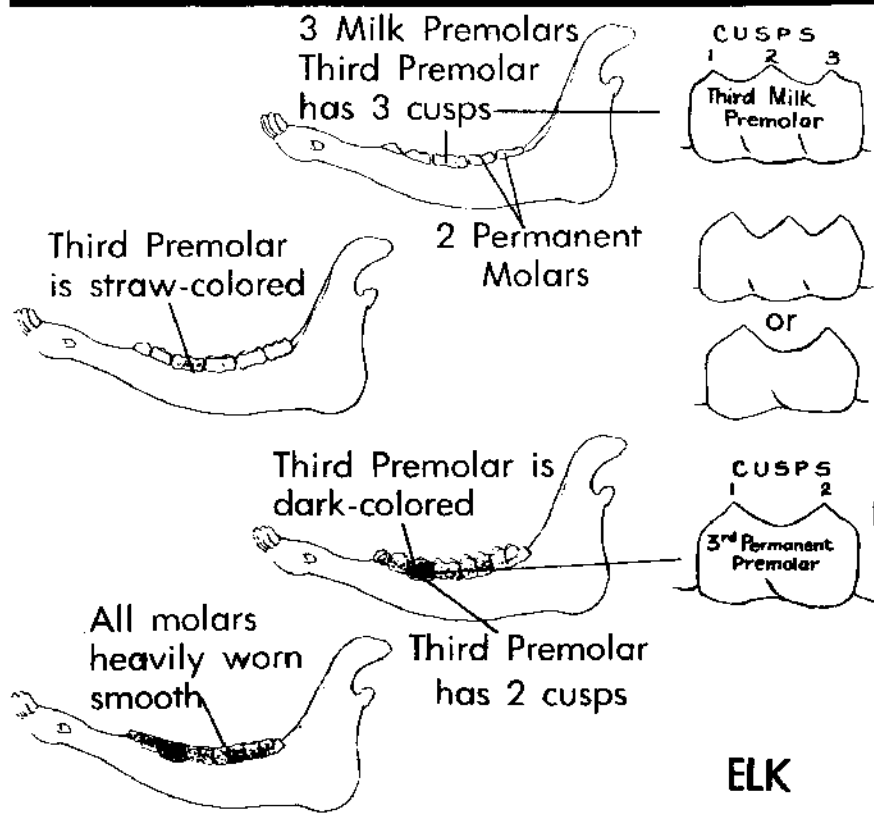
PRIME—3 to 6 Years

OLD—7+ Years

All incisors heavily worn

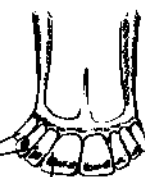


DEER



YEARLING

3 Milk Incisors Remain
1 Permanent Incisor



2½ YEAR

Third Premolar in process of being replaced

PRIME—3 to 7 years

OLD—8+ Years

All Incisors heavily worn



ELK